

Annual Report to the People

November 2011
Darlington County



Clemson Extension Darlington County

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Mission Statement

The mission of the Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service is to provide sound, scientifically based information to South Carolinians and help them use that information to improve the quality of their lives.

U.S. Rep. James E. Clyburn Honored Darlington 4-H for their Commitment to teach Youth about Agriculture in South Carolina



U.S. Rep. James E. Clyburn honored Darlington County 4-H as guest speaker at a ribbon cutting ceremony for the Clemson University Extension Service and Center Community Coalition 4-H Community Garden. Rep. Clyburn encouraged the youth to follow their dreams. Clyburn represents the Sixth District of South Carolina in the U.S. House of Representatives, is the former House Majority Whip and presently serves as the third ranking Democrat in the U.S. House.

The purpose of the garden is to help students appreciate and become more aware of agriculture and how important it is to the world. S.C. Rep. Denny Woodall Neilson (District 56) served as the Mistress of Ceremonies, and State Executive Director of S.C. Farm Service Agency Dr. Laurie C. Lawson gave the welcoming address. Special thanks were given to S.C. Rep. Robert Q. Williams (District 62) for his continued support of the 4-H Community Garden and being an integral part of the Community Garden Task Force Committee.

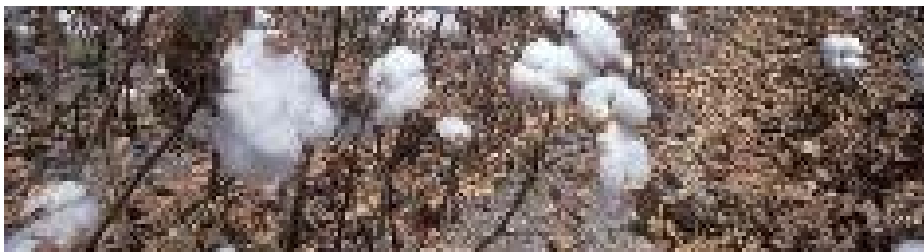
Pee Dee Area Farmers Increase Profits with Commodity Marketing Skills



Volatility in commodity prices and increases in input costs have caused farmers to look more carefully at break even prices and their bottom line. To assist in decision making, a Commodity Marketing & Risk Management Symposium has been held at the Pee Dee Research and Education Center since 2008. It has focused on grain marketing (corn, wheat and sorghum) and crop insurance options to reduce risk.

To keep the program fresh and interesting, the planning committee (sponsors' representatives and Clemson Extension) revised the agenda for the third annual event to include cotton marketing as well as a session on land transition planning (Keeping the Farm in your Family) featuring regionally and nationally known speakers. The 2011 symposium, held on February 24, was well-received and feedback from the 84 attendees was very positive. Sponsors of the 2011 symposium were ArborOne Farm Credit, Carolinas Cotton Growers Cooperative, Palmetto Grain Brokerage and McLean-Marechal Agency (Nationwide Insurance).

Participants reported an increase in their knowledge and skills relative to estate planning, as well as grain and cotton market volatility. Certified Crop Advisors also improved their skills in commodity marketing and received four continuing education units (CCA CEUs) in the crop management category. Future plans include sessions on using enterprise budgets to calculate your own variable and fixed costs and breakeven price, cotton price risk management and pricing strategies, plus breakout sessions on forward contracts, hedges and options. Producers are already looking forward to and asking for the date of next year's educational event, which will be held at the PDREC in Florence on January 12, 2012.



Extension offers Confined Animal Manure Managers (CAMM) Training

The focus of CAMM trainings is to educate facility owners and operators about water quality protection, best management practices, animal manure utilization, nuisance vector control, and dead animal disposal.

An owner or operator of an animal confinement facility must pass an examination to become a Certified Animal Waste Applicator. Livestock Agent Lee Van Vlakte planned, coordinated, and implemented 8 CAMM trainings throughout the Pee Dee Region.



The trainings were held in Sumter, Florence, Dillon, Kershaw, Lee, and Darlington Counties. Over 170 confined animal producers attended these meetings. Those in attendance came from all over the state of South Carolina.

New Initiative Supports Women Farmers in South Carolina



The South Carolina Women's Agricultural Network (SC WAgN) supports women in agriculture by providing positive learning environments, networking, and empowerment. The primary purposes of SC WAgN are to encourage and support women in agriculture provide and strengthen networks for women in agriculture; provide educational and mentoring opportunities for women in agriculture; raise community awareness of agricultural related issues and concerns; and sustain farming livelihoods.

Membership is open to any person supporting the mission and purpose of SC WAgN. The network is comprised of women farmers, agricultural professionals, agricultural educators, and informed consumers committed to supporting and providing educational opportunities to women working in agriculture and ag-related businesses.



www.clemson.edu/scwagn

Darlington County 4-H Participates in Carolina Clear Project



More than 1000+ youth in Darlington County have learned the importance of keeping our ground water safe through the efforts of Carolina Clear and 4-H programs.

Through activities in stormwater education and awareness students learned the importance of water conservation and steps everyone can take to help improve water quality. One such activity was the 4-H2O Water Quality-Outdoor Adventure Camp held at Kalmia Gardens of Coker College. Participants learned, how a watershed works and how a watershed affects the quality of water in the lake, including the impact of stormwater.

Through hands-on activities in the classroom, field, forest and water, local youth were educated on the importance of water quality, water chemistry, testing, and microscopic identification of invertebrates and algae. The above activities, in addition to fishing and tree identification, were presented in partnership with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources and South Carolina Forestry Commission.

Boiled Peanuts a Southern Delicacy

Boiled peanuts are a Southern delicacy and McCall Farms wanted to keep their market share. Tony Melton (pictured below) worked with them to develop a beautiful, pretty, visually perfect peanut so when you open the can, you would love their peanuts and they could keep their market share.



Marion Swink, owner of McCall Farms, said "The southeast grows peanuts in a number of different areas, but McCall farms needed a brighter color and a better flavor peanut for canning. Through Clemson University and their research program, they have helped us identify and develop a variety that has made McCall farms the leader in the boiled peanut industry."

Pee Dee Residents Learn About Environmentally Friendly Landscaping

One hundred seventy-nine residents of the Pee Dee learned about environmentally friendly landscaping through the 2011 Pee Dee Backyard Landscape Series. Developed by Dr. Dara Park, Assistant Professor, Clemson University and Terasa Young, Natural Resource Agent, Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service, the Series was designed to assist homeowners in creating a beautiful and functional landscape while saving time, money, and protecting natural resources. The Series was held the first Thursday of each month from March through September at the Doctors Bruce and Lee Foundation Library in Florence. Each presentation focused on a different topic with all topics incorporating the principles of environmental landscape management.

The topics of the Series included:

- Carolina Yards & Neighborhoods
- Right Plant, Right Place
- Vegetable Gardening
- Maintaining Southern Lawns
- Drought Tolerant Plants
- Managing Yard Pests
- Gardening for Wildlife



The Series was well attended and the organizers received positive feedback from those completing evaluation surveys. Attendees Pat & Henry Bromley said, "As transplanted northerners, we have so much to learn and can't get enough." Based on attendance and feedback, the Series will continue in 2012.

McCall Farms-We Can



Growing a small canning and freezing operation in rural Effingham, S.C. into a business that prepares nearly 2 million servings a day, takes expertise in the business and agriculture.

After the acquisition of other similar business such as Glory Foods and Peanut Patch Peanuts, McCall Farms needed additional reliable sources of quality raw agricultural products.

Tony Melton worked with McCall Farm's vegetable growers in S.C. to produce the quality raw product needed to make quality canned and frozen product. This year McCall Farm's purchased or grew over 1100 tractor/trailer loads of raw product in S.C.

Stop the Violence Month

Solicitor Will Rogers and the Fourth Judicial Circuit Domestic Violence Coordinating Council ushered in October as Stop the Violence month with a Domestic Violence Kickoff at Coker College. The Pee Dee Coalition, the Clemson Institute for Economic and Community Development and the Fourth Judicial Circuit Solicitor's Office recognized the importance in raising awareness among the public regarding domestic violence.

This is an important issue for our community to address. Domestic Violence occurs every fifteen seconds in the US and is the leading cause of injury to women ages fifteen to forty-six, more common than car accidents or cancer. In South Carolina thirty-one women were killed during a domestic violence incident during 2009. South Carolina ranks eighth in the nation for men who murder women. Domestic Violence is a local, state, and national problem.

The Fourth Judicial Circuit Solicitor's Office has been diligent over recent years in prosecuting domestic violence cases. Senator Gerald Malloy of Hartsville joined the Council in the Kickoff.



Sen. Gerald Malloy

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4-H Junior Master Gardner Program

Elementary school children in the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades are eligible each year to participate in the 4-H Jr. Master Gardener Program, which is sponsored by The Darlington County Clemson University Extension Service 4-H and Kalmia Gardens of Coker College. The program is a horticultural and environmental science education, as well as one of leadership and life skills development. The program also provides these young people with a chance to help out by doing community service, which is one of the requirements of completing the JMGP.

Another benefit of the JMGP that these youngsters experience is outdoor activity by working in an actual garden. According to national studies, the healthiest children are ones who participate in outdoor activities every day. The JMGP teaches children a variety of garden lessons and information including facts about the different soils used in farming, vegetable and fruit gardens, composting, the differences and distinctions between both bad insects and beneficial insects, information on fertilizers, facts about the water cycle, plant disease, how to identify different types of trees, as well as other skills that are essential for leadership qualities in today's society.

The Kalmia Gardens of Coker College are located on a former 19th century plantation with 35 acres of private botanical gardens. The historical home of Thomas E. Hart, built in 1820, is also located on the plantation. The gardens are on the National Registry of Historical Places.